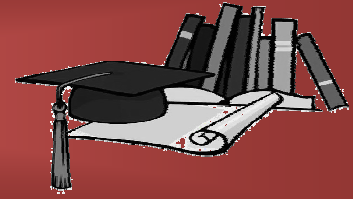


GETTING READY FOR GRADUATE SCHOOL



McNair Scholars Program, Park Library 339
www.mcnaair.cmich.edu (989) 774-1364

What You Can Do Right Now

Although it may seem like you just made the transition to college, you can be doing a lot of things to prepare yourself for graduate school right now! As an undergraduate, especially during your freshman and sophomore years, you can try to expose yourself to as many different kinds of classes and professors as possible. By doing so, you can begin to **explore different career options** and figure out what you are most interested in.

Talking to your professors, beyond your classroom work, can help you generate ideas about topics you may wish to pursue for an advance degree. You can also **talk to your professors** about their work and research and how they got to be where they are today – these can really be fascinating conversations! **Pursue undergraduate research opportunities** by asking if you can assist a faculty member with his/her research.

Besides exploring your interests, you can focus on doing the best you can in your classes so that you have a **solid academic record**. Your grades can open many doors for you, so doing your best from the start will put you in a better long-term position.

Getting involved with student/community organizations not only builds your resume, it can expose you to topics and people who might be able to help further your goals through their knowledge and connection with others – **networking is key!**

Finding the Right Grad Program

- 1) Research the faculty to find out what kind of research they are doing.
- 2) See what funding options the department offers.
- 3) Ask how long it typically takes students to complete the program.
- 4) Assess how competitive the program is by finding out the average GPA and GRE score for applicants.
- 5) Consider the location of the school and whether you would enjoy living there.

Let Us Show You How to Get Your Ph.D. For FREE - The McNair Scholars Program

Steps to Apply To Grad School...

- Develop a list of programs you will apply to including several “reach” schools, several “mid-tier” schools and several “back-up” schools – **six programs** is a reasonable number to shoot for.
- Collect all pertinent information needed to apply including deadlines, contact numbers, items you need to submit, etc.
- Start studying for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) – this test is required by most grad schools.
- Begin working on a “personal statement” that outlines your academic/career goals and why you are a strong candidate for graduate school.
- Ask your professors (you usually need three) to write letters of recommendation for you; be sure that they are familiar with your work and know what your goals are!
- Start this process early – spring semester of your junior year; most applications are due between December 15 and February 15 of your senior year.

